

MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL

For Immediate Release

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Public hearing on plans set for September 10 in Rockville...

COUNTY REDISTRICTING PROCESS CONTINUES

The Commission on Redistricting for Montgomery County's five councilmanic districts is stepping up its outreach to the community. The commission has just completed a public meeting in Olney to solicit public input into its planning process.

The Commission will hold a public hearing on the redistricting plans at 7 PM on Monday, September 10 at the Council Office Building, 100 Maryland Avenue in Rockville in the 7th Floor Council Chamber. Those wishing to sign up to testify should call 240-777-7931.

The following plans are being considered by the commission for presentation to the Council:

Plan B, submitted by Republican members Jayne Plank of Kensington and William Roberts of Poolesville, utilizes a minimalist approach and moves twelve precincts to achieve their ideal plan.

Plan D, submitted by Democratic members William Sher of Kensington and David Davidson of Bethesda, focuses on keeping Olney in one councilmanic district by moving eight precincts from District 2 to 4 while achieving balance of populations by moving several precincts between districts, 3, 4, and 5 and a small number from Districts 1 and 2.

Plan J, offered by Commission chair Shirley Small-Rougeau of Silver Spring, prioritizes drawing lines that minimize disruption to communities of interest, balances population, and respects incumbents by moving the least number of precincts into or out of their districts while at the same time achieving a reasonable and manageable sized area. Plan J also creates one majority "minority" (57 percent) district (District 5) and one highly minority (47 percent) district (District 4). It embraces the full interest of the 1982 amendments to the federal Voting Rights Act and affords an enhancement of the opportunity for minority groups to empower themselves politically

through “coalition-building across lines of race and ethnicity,” as pointed out by Councilmember Isiah Leggett.

Plan K, submitted by Democratic member Stephen Berry, places priority on “respect for the incumbency of Councilmember Nancy Dacek by refraining from moving her home precinct, which deadlocks movement of precincts on the western side of the county, into District 1.” It keeps Olney and Brookeville intact in District 2 and moves two essentially rural precincts, which include the towns of Sandy Spring, Ashton, Brinklow, and Sunshine into District 4. Precinct 8-10, which lies half in Olney and half in Sandy Spring, is split along Batchellors Forest Road with the northern half going into District 2 and the southern half to District 4.

All plans accommodated the requests from two communities to reunite them in one councilmanic district.

The Redistricting Commission consists of nine members – five Democrats and four Republicans – appointed by the County Council. The commission will hold a public hearing on September 10 and must present its final recommendations to the Council by November 15. The Council will hold its own public hearing and must take action on new Council district boundaries within 90 days of the presentation of the Commission plan or it becomes law.

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